AIR FORCE EXPERIMENTATION OFFICE

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AIR FORCE APPROVES JEFX 99 RESULTS

Langley Air Force Base, Va.--- For most, "2010" vision usually refers to an above average eyesight. But for the Air Force, it means the ability to see and plan for the year 2010 battlespace. Joint Expeditionary Force Experiment 1999 helped focus that vision, last September, while it explored new operational concepts and technology innovations for the 21st century Expeditionary Aerospace Force.

"Most of what we learned in JEFX 99 and from previous experiments improves our ability to command and control aerospace forces at deployed locations," said Colonel Terry Thompson, Director of the Air Force Experimentation Office. "The results from the experiment fall directly in line with our new Air Force expeditionary structure and mindset," he continued.

Those results, recently released by the AFEO in its JEFX 99 Final Assessment Report, recommended that 26 of the 57 technology and process initiatives examined during the experiment be considered for fielding or implementation by the Air Force.

General Michael Ryan, the Air Force Chief of Staff, approved that recommendation and directed that the following actions be taken to leverage the "lessons learned" in JEFX 99. They include:

- Field a state-of-the-art communications capability that provides senior commanders direct communications between forward and rear area commanders while commanders are en route to the forward area
- Institutionalize the En route Expeditionary Operations Center concept. These specially equipped KC-135 aircraft offer deploying expeditionary tactical commanders and deploying forces access to battlefield information for mission preparation and rehearsal
- Make distributed operations – "virtually" connecting command and support centers through a secure satellite-based communications network-- a normal way of doing business in the expeditionary aerospace force
- Establish a permanent stateside operations support center to provide reachback support for future contingency operations and deployments

- Institutionalize combined space and air operations planning as demonstrated in JEFX 99
- Integrate Dynamic Battle Control and Battle Control Center operations—functions that facilitate automatic re-targeting of airborne assets against time-critical-targets on the ground—into future large-scale exercises and experimentation events
- Continue investing in the right intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance tools to aid deployed commanders in their planning and battle damage assessment processes
- Examine the technical, process, and security policy changes necessary to fully integrate our allies and coalition partners into the command and control functions of the Combined Air Operations Centers
- Develop and implement an Air Force-standard information management plan to harness the volumes of C2 information available to deployed AEFs

"We collected reams of information during the experiment and have given our recommendations to the Air Force leadership, " explained Thompson. "Now we must prioritize the technological and operational processes based on warfighter requirements and find the best way to fund them."

According to Thompson, teams from the Air Staff, major commands, and the Aerospace Command and Control, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Center at Langley AFB, Va. have begun work to move those technology and process discoveries from the experimental "drawing board" into the hands of our warfighters.

Lt. Gen. Lansford Trapp, the Joint Forces Air Component Commander for both the Expeditionary Force Experiment 98 and JEFX 99, summarized the experiments' results:

"We demonstrated the viability of providing, on demand, a 'virtual' command and control process that supports the Air Force's new expeditionary vision," the general said. "We have to get more of these processes and technologies out from 'behind the green door' and into the warfighters' hands."

JEFX 99 was the second in a series of large-scale Air Force experiments. It involved over 5,000 joint and allied personnel at 11 locations, examining 57 process and technology initiatives. Over 109 combat and support aircraft flew more than 450 sorties during the two-week experiment.

The mock war, similar to recent operations in Kosovo, tested the concept of splitting command and control functions between a forward-deployed operational area and several support bases and centers in the United States.

The joint experiment took nearly 18 months to plan and execute and included participants from every major Air Force command, along with participants from the Army and Navy and from six allied countries.

Major experiment operating locations included the Aerospace Command and Control Training and Innovation Group at Hurlburt Field, Fla., the Operations Support Center at Langley, the Tanker Airlift Control Center at Scott AFB, Ill., the Air Force Space Command's Aerospace Operations Center at Vandenburg AFB, Calif., the 366th Wing at Mountain Home AFB, Idaho, and live fly operations over the Nellis AFB training ranges in southern Nevada.

Planning is now underway for JEFX 2000, the Air Force's third large-scale experiment, scheduled for September 2000. It will be the Air Force's experiment within the larger, Joint Forces Command-sponsored joint experiment, Millennium Challenge 00.